

REMARKS

Reconsideration and allowance of the subject application are respectfully solicited.

Claims 10, 18, 19, 31, 39, and 40 are pending, with Claims 10, 18, 31, and 39 being independent. Claims 10, 18, 19, 39, and 40 were allowed. Claims 30 and 44 through 64 have been cancelled without prejudice. Claim 31 has been amended, namely by rewriting the same in independent form.

Claims 30 and 44 through 64 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) over U.S. Patent No. 6,493,008 B1 (Yui). Claim 31 was objected to and indicated as being allowable if rewritten in independent form. All rejections and objections are respectfully traversed and are submitted to have been obviated by the cancellation without prejudice of Claims 30 and 44 through 64, and the rewriting of Claim 31 in independent form.

The dependent claims are also submitted to be patentable because they set forth additional aspects of the present invention and are dependent from independent claims discussed above. Therefore, separate and individual consideration of each dependent claim is respectfully requested.

This Amendment After Final Rejection is an earnest attempt to advance prosecution and reduce the number of issues, and is believed to clearly place this application in condition for allowance. Furthermore, Applicants respectfully submit that a full appreciation of these amendments will not require undue time or effort given the Examiner's familiarity with this application. Moreover, this Amendment was not earlier presented because Applicants earnestly believed that the prior Amendment placed the subject application in condition for allowance. Accordingly, entry of this Amendment under 37 C.F.R. § 1.116 is respectfully requested.

Applicants submit that this application is in condition for allowance, and a Notice of Allowance is respectfully requested.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our Washington, D.C. office by telephone at (202) 530-1010 All correspondence should continue to be directed to our address given below.

Respectfully submitted,



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